

Integrated Program in Neuroscience Letter of Understanding

[Close](#)

This agreement is designed to promote dialogue between the supervisor(s) and the student to define their expectations and to increase awareness of the rights and responsibilities governing the training program and the student-supervisor relationship. The aim is to avoid problems and to achieve a positive and mutually beneficial experience.

Submitting this agreement attests to:

1. Compliance with University Regulations and Guidelines Governing Graduate Students and Supervisors

- Rights and responsibilities established under the [Handbook on Student Rights and Responsibilities \(The Green Book\)](#).
- General Information, Regulations and Research Guidelines Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies documented in the [Graduate Studies Handbook](#), including University policies on research ethics, intellectual property, conflict of interest, leaves of absence, vacation time and holidays.
- Supervisory Guidelines established by Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, and documented in section 10.1 of the [Graduate Studies Handbook](#) and the appended document describing responsibilities of graduate students, supervisors, graduate programs and the University.
- Official [University Policies, Procedures and Guidelines](#) (including harassment policy) documented on the website of the University Secretariat.
- Unit policies and procedures: It is the responsibility of the academic unit to inform students and supervisors.

2. Compliance with Policies and Regulations on Ethical Conduct of Research

If the Student is working with human subjects/animals or tissues, radioactive or biohazardous material, lasers or other hazards, the Supervisor will ensure that all ethics certifications and training will be obtained and appropriate safety protocols are followed.

3. Commitment to Regular Performance Review and Completion of Progress Reports in compliance with the policies of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies [see [Graduate Research Progress Tracking](#)] and the Integrated Program in Neuroscience.

4. Compliance with the Policies of the Integrated Program in Neuroscience, including funding, academic requirements and milestones.

Once the supervisor clicks "submit" a copy will be automatically sent to the student. They will then be asked to send you and our department an email indicating that they agree to be supervised by you and that they are aware of and understand the content of this agreement. Once we receive our copy, the student's name will be taken off our database and their recommendation will be sent for final review to Graduate Studies.

The rest of the document summarizes all the policies of the Integrated Program in Neuroscience, policies which have not changed from those instituted under GPNS.

ID:

Student Name:

Supervisor's First Name: **Last Name:**

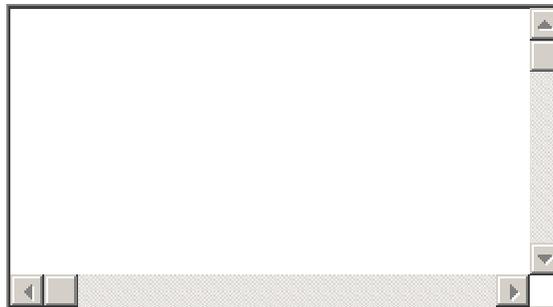
Lab room number and building:

Supervisor Office phone

Supervisor Email:

Verify Supervisor Email Address:

Provide a short description of the research project that will be undertaken by this student.



Financial Commitment: The Integrated Program in Neuroscience (IPN) has a guaranteed funding policy. The current minimum stipends established by the IPN Graduate Program Committee are documented in [Minimum stipends for IPN students](#). Researchers must guarantee that each student under his/her supervision receives at least the specified minimum stipend, through a combination of internal/external awards and payment from research funds. Payment of the minimum stipend cannot be terminated without the permission of the Graduate Program Committee upon demonstration of just cause and with reasonable notice.

Estimated cost of student project (supplies etc):

Entering which degree:

Stipend amount - from supervisor:

Stipend amount - other: **Guaranteed Source:**

Beginning and end dates of your funding sources



Total initial yearly student stipend:

Note - Minimum stipends for entering students are:

- \$18,150 for Quebec M.Sc. students**
- \$23,175 for non-Quebec Canadian M.Sc. students**
- \$29,875 for International M.Sc. students**
- \$20,000 All Ph.D. students**

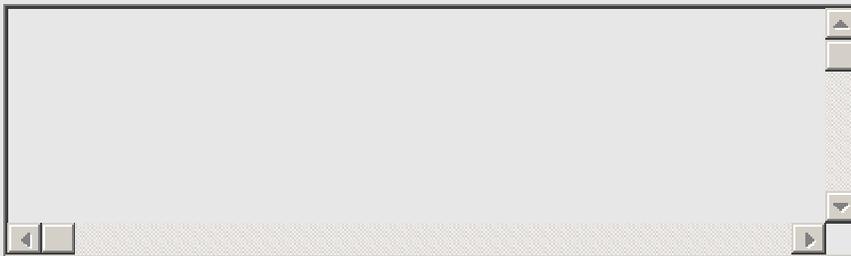
OTHER SUPPORT: The supervisor is responsible for providing access to sufficient resources for the graduate student’s research project. The researcher should specify his/her policy on funding of other activities such as attending conferences to present research, subject to availability of funds:



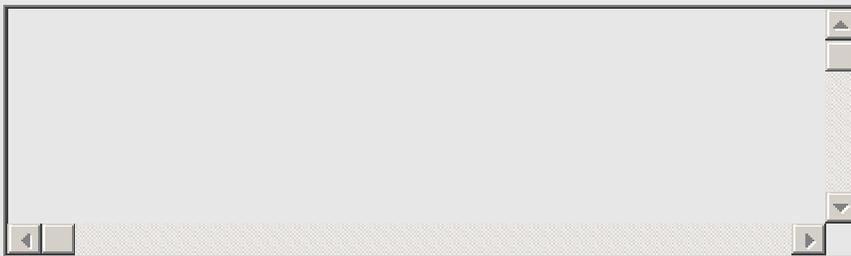
Please fill these sections out:

Expectations re the Supervisor’s Research Environment: Specify:

Operational expectations, including working hours, frequency of student-supervisor meetings, group meetings, reports, record keeping, contribution to general duties, assistance from and to other personnel/students.



Expected attendance at journal clubs, seminars, etc, aside from official requirements of the Graduate Program.



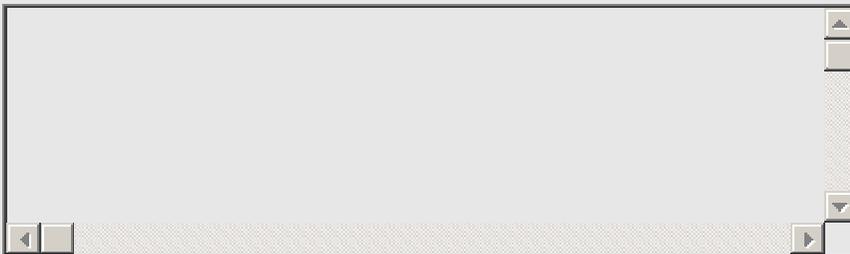
Policies on authorship (within the norms of the discipline and McGill's Policy on Research Ethics).



Policies on review of written work (extent of supervisor's involvement with student's presentations, thesis preparation, time-frame for return of comments, etc.).



Academic Preparation: Specify any deficiencies in the student's background preparation (academic knowledge, technical or language skills, etc.) that must be addressed to avoid negative impact on research performance or course work.



Program's Milestones (Integrated Program in Neuroscience)

Workshops mandated by IPN: Responsible Conduct of Research

Please Note: **You do not have to fill out the Program's Milestones, they are meant only as a guide for supervisor and student to follow throughout their program of study.**

	FINAL DATE	ACTUAL
Select advisory Committee/preliminary meeting (1st term)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
First year report to Advisory Committee by:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Most recent meeting with Advisory Committee	Annual <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Submit thesis proposal by: (1 yr. Max 18 months)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
(MSc students transferring to Ph.D. may submit PhD proposal now)		
Candidacy examination if Ph.D. student by:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
(Max 24 months (i.e. end of PhD3 for most students, must be registered for 531-700A or B)		
Advisory committee meeting by:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Submission package & request to Grad. Prog, Office by:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
(3 weeks notice required)		
Candidacy exam if transfer from M.Sc. To Ph.D by (Max 30 months)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Advisory committee meeting by:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Submission package & request to Grad. Prog, Office by:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
(3 weeks notice required)		
Present thesis seminar (3 months prior to submission)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Complete nominations of examiner's form (1-2 months prior to thesis submission)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Note: Do not schedule candidacy examinations or seminars during July or August.

Please read the following:

RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS, SUPERVISORS, GRADUATE PROGRAM AND THE UNIVERSITY

(Adapted from: Supervisory Guidelines, Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, Draft March 2010)

General Responsibilities of the Student

Be Aware of and Follow Administrative Requirements

- Maintain awareness of all policies, procedures and deadlines that affect you.
- Monitor and use your official McGill email address for official correspondence related to your program of study and registration as a student at McGill. Regularly access and read the University's Information Technology web page, including use of e-mail (<http://www.mcgill.ca/email-policy/policy/>). Consult official University documents and communicate with your program's administrators.
- Maintain your registration throughout the duration of the program, including ensuring that visas and employment authorization documents, where required, are kept up to date.
- Adhere to all deadlines and policies regarding registration, meeting your program's milestones, thesis submission, and if necessary, withdrawal.

Maintain Accessibility and Communication

- Keep in touch with your supervisor and program administrators. Provide your supervisor and program administrators with your permanent and current contact information and advise the supervisor of any absences.
- Engage in open communication and feedback with your supervisor on all issues, including research design and results, technical difficulties, other demands of the Program (courses, etc.), personal concerns affecting research progress and meeting milestones (such as medical and family-related issues), expectations, and supervisory practices.
- Meet regularly with your supervisor and thesis advisory committee to report on progress; comply with the Research Progress Tracking Policy of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.
- Identify and address problems early. Be aware of the guidelines for conflict resolution (<http://www.mcgill.ca/ipn/continuing/conflict>). Inform the IPN Director or Associate Director in a timely fashion, of any serious difficulties including illness, trouble with course work or other program milestones, and problems with supervision. Supervisory issues could include mismatch of interests, major professional academic disagreements, interpersonal conflicts, or potential conflict of interest situations. If a change of supervisor is warranted, the Program will work with the student to find a new supervisor.

Perform Academically

- Collaborate with your supervisor to select the members of your thesis advisory committee.
- Prepare a research plan and timetable in consultation with your supervisor as a basis for the program of study, including any proposed fieldwork.
- Work diligently towards your program milestones and meet them. Be aware that continuing in the Program requires satisfactory performance in course work and research. The failure policy of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies requires that a student withdraw from the University upon a second failing grade, including supplemental exams, in any course(s) required for the Program; a second unsatisfactory research progress report is also grounds for dismissal.
- Give serious consideration and timely response to comments and advice from your supervisor and/or members of your thesis advisory committee.
- Apply to all appropriate sources of funding.

Conduct Research in a Responsible Manner

- Uphold the academic integrity of the University. Understand what constitutes plagiarism, misconduct and cheating.
- Be aware of emergency procedures in your workplace (in case of fire, etc.). Obtain specific training and certification related to occupational health and safety, as required for your workplace and to undertake the proposed research. Maintain a workplace that is safe, tidy and healthy.
- Comply with all policies on research ethics and procedures governing use of human or animal subjects.
- Follow good laboratory practices and research etiquette. Respect the work and equipment of others, and show tolerance and respect for others sharing the same facilities. Discuss potential large costs or expenses when planning the research and prior to purchase. Be aware of laboratory/office operational rules and requirements. Maintain good records of each stage of the research; ensure that records and associated experimental samples are appropriately stored and

that they remain properly archived with the laboratory. Understand that experimental records and materials are the property of the laboratory, although you have a right to retain copies of these records related to your thesis research.

- Discuss with your supervisor, very early on, any expectations and policies concerning authorship of publications, and issues surrounding copyright and ownership of intellectual property. Note, your thesis research must be publishable in the public domain, although you may request withholding of your thesis for a period of up to one year.

Take Advantage of Opportunities for Professional Development

- Develop your professional skills (including presentation skills, teaching, writing reports and grant applications, preparation of your curriculum vitae, interviewing techniques, and management skills including time management) by attending workshops offered through Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, Teaching and Learning Services, your Faculty and your Graduate Program.
- Attend seminars and colloquia.

General Responsibilities of the Supervisor(s)

Supervising graduate students is an important an integral part of a professor's workload and academic duty. Each professor is expected to participate in activities to improve teaching, supervisory and research skills throughout his/her career. Within the context of the role as supervisor, a professor's primary task is to guide and inspire his or her students to reach their scholarly/scientific potential. In order to maintain the quality learning environment outlined below, it is advised that supervisors not take on more than 4 new students a year.

Supervisors are expected to:

Follow Rules and Regulations

- Be aware of and conform to University's and the Program's requirements and procedures.
- Monitor the student's progress in achieving the milestones of his/her degree program. Participate in the University's mandatory progress tracking procedures, including documented Advisory Committee meetings at least once per year, to ensure that supervision and research objectives as well as a realistic timetable for meeting objectives are clear, in writing and commonly understood by both student and supervisor. Any deficiencies should be documented early and remedial action identified in consultation with the student and the Advisory Committee. Understand that dismissal of a student from the Program for lack of performance in research can be requested (to the IPN Director) only after two unsatisfactory research progress reports to the Advisory Committee.
- Understand that Professors must meet qualifications and standards of performance in carrying out supervisory responsibilities. The IPN Director, in consultation with the Graduate Program Committee, determines and regularly reviews supervisory privileges of each professor in the Integrated Program in Neuroscience according to experience, performance, availability of resources and number of students supervised. Limitations on supervisory privileges may be imposed on supervisors who demonstrate a pattern of problems in their relationships with IPN graduate students. These limitations may include requiring a co-supervisor, limiting the number

of students or their program level), requiring actions to improve supervisory skills, or suspending privileges.

Maintain Accessibility and Communication

- Maintain open communication with the student on all issues, including expectations and supervisory practices. Be available for regular consultation with the student and the student's thesis advisory committee, where applicable.
- Be sensitive to other program requirements, including course work, in your expectation of the student's time management. Keep in mind that passing grades (B- or better) are required for students to maintain their good standing in the Program. Reasonable time must be available for students to attend classes, study and prepare assignments.
- Examine thoroughly all written material relevant to the thesis/research project submitted by the student and provide constructive suggestions, orally and/or in writing, for improving the work, when necessary.
- Together with the student, outline an appropriate timetable for the provision of work for review and for feedback, depending on deadlines and the nature and length of the document. In general, it would be appropriate to provide written or oral comments to the student within two to four weeks of receipt of the submitted material according to the nature of the document, but it is recognized that on occasion, a longer response time may be needed because of other commitments of the supervisor. The students and supervisor should bear in mind that relying exclusively on oral comments or summaries of discussions can be problematic in the event of a conflict.
- Inform the program administrators (i.e. IPN Director, Associate Director or Student Affairs Officer), in a timely fashion, of any serious difficulties which may arise in supervision. These might include mismatch of interests, major professional academic disagreements, interpersonal conflicts, or potential conflict of interest situations. Changing supervisors is a last course but if a change of supervisor is warranted, the Program will assist the student in finding a new supervisor.
- Inform the student of any prolonged absences, including sabbatical leaves, and make satisfactory alternative supervisory arrangements as required.
- Be on the alert for and acknowledge any personal difficulties of the student and refer him/her to the appropriate University student services for support.

Provide and Convey Research Information

- Provide guidance, instruction, and encouragement regarding the student's research activities and professional development. Guide the student in the selection and planning of an appropriate research topic.
- Ensure that the student has information on relevant theories and the methodological and technical skills necessary for the research. Ensure that the student has access to intellectual resources and research opportunities.
- Discuss with the student, very early on, the University's policies governing copyright and intellectual property. Discuss *a priori* any specific expectations concerning authorship of

publications, and issues surrounding ownership of intellectual property and disclosure (this may include patents/licenses).

Contribute to the Student's overall Professional Development

- Encourage the student to disseminate his/her research results through publications and conference presentations; to participate in departmental/university seminars and colloquia, and to attend workshops on professional skill development.
- Assist the student with applications for funding and with his/her next career step. Provide letters of reference and general advice on career development.
- Inform the student clearly and in a timely manner when academic performance is not meeting expectations. Work with the student to identify problems and find solutions, including bringing problems forward for discussion with the advisory committee.

Provide an Appropriate Research Environment

- Advise the student on the standards for quality and style to which theses and papers for publication must conform and the rules and disciplinary convention of authorship.
- Ensure that the student is informed of the best practices for the responsible conduct of research, including respect for academic integrity. Ensure the student is informed of general emergency and safety measures in the workplace and at the University (e.g. emergency procedures and numbers), and obtains training and certification in laboratory safety, research with human subjects, animal handling, and safety in handling radioactive and hazardous materials, as relevant.
- Maintain a professional relationship with the student. The University does not permit a professor to supervise any individual with whom he or she has a personal relationship that may constitute a conflict of interest. Should such an occasion arise, the professor must resign as supervisor. The Program, in such instances, will assist the student in finding another supervisor.
- Avoid conflicts of interest in proprietary research. Declare any business relationship with the student or research being conducted by the student. A professor must not supervise a student who is employed in a company in which the professor has an interest. Research conducted by the student for his/her thesis must be publishable in the public domain.
- Ensure to the best of your ability appropriate funding to cover the operating costs incurred by the student to carry out his/her thesis research and to provide a stipend according to the Program's policies.

General Responsibilities of Graduate Program

The Director, Associate Director and the administrative support staff of the Integrated Program in Neuroscience play a key role in the life of IPN graduate students. It is the responsibility of the Program to promote conditions conducive to the student's research and intellectual growth and provide appropriate guidance on the progress of the research and the standards expected for successful completion of a degree. As such, the Integrated Program in Neuroscience will:

Follow Rules and Regulations

- Ensure that the responsibilities of Director are assumed by a member of academic staff with administrative competence and knowledge of the various aspects of graduate studies. The Chair of the Steering Committee will normally make this appointment. This appointment should be considered a major part of the individual's workload in assignment of other duties and in awarding of merit. The duties of Graduate Program Directors are listed in the [General Information, Regulations and Research Guidelines](#) of Graduate Postdoctoral Studies.
- Ensure that the Director, Associate Director, members of the Graduate Program Committee and administrative support staff are knowledgeable about the Program's requirements, the procedures for comprehensive examinations and oral defences, and other policies and procedures.
- Provide students with information on the Program, the University's graduate and research policies, the University's student services, and sources of financial support.
- Provide an orientation session for new students. The agenda for these sessions should include at a minimum the following: an overview of the Program's policies and requirements; areas of faculty expertise in research; expected performance and timelines for completion of degree requirements; the University's policies pertaining to ethics, authorship, intellectual property, responsible conduct of research, academic integrity, harassment and discrimination; safety and workplace regulations; procedures for conflict resolution, and information on financial support.
- Participate in the University's mandatory progress tracking procedures to ensure that supervision and research objectives as well as a realistic timetable for meeting objectives are clear, in writing and commonly understood by both student and supervisor. The Program determines how mandatory progress tracking is carried out, ensures that the process is the same for every student in the Integrated Program in Neuroscience, and intervenes when a student receives unsatisfactory research progress reports.

Assign or Approve Supervisory Assignments

- Establish a schedule of achievable milestones for each degree program under its jurisdiction. Ensure that the program design is appropriate for achieving the training objectives within a reasonable time frame and consistent with the policies of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.
- Ensure that procedures are in place such that all IPN students who register in the University have a qualified supervisor
- Establish policies and procedures with respect to quality of supervision within the University's guidelines, including qualifications of professors for sole, joint or co-supervision of students in the Integrated Program in Neuroscience. Ensure that supervisors have competence in their respective students' proposed areas of research, supervisory skills and interpersonal communication. Ensure that the maximum number of students under the direction of a single supervisor is consistent with the ability of that supervisor to provide quality supervision, taking into account his/her workload, availability of any required funding, and the norms of the discipline. The Director, in consultation with the Graduate Program Committee, determines and regularly reviews supervisory privileges of each professor in the Integrated Program in Neuroscience according to experience, performance, availability of resources and number of students supervised. Limitations on supervisory privileges may include requiring a co-supervisor, limiting the number of students or their program level, requiring actions to improve supervisory skills, and suspending privileges.

- The Director is responsible for ensuring that the mandatory progress tracking procedures of the university are followed, and for advising parties on how to resolve difficulties that arise in the supervisory process.
- Establish in writing clear procedures for conflict resolution and for dealing with changes of supervision. Ensure that this information is made available to students. If a change of supervisor is warranted, assist the student in finding a new supervisor. The Director is responsible for establishing and publicizing this policy, for advising the student and members of the thesis advisory committee and/or supervisor, and seeking consensus on and resolution of the issue(s) involved. The Dean and Associate Dean of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies are available for consultation and assistance as needed.

Ensure that each students has a Thesis Advisory Committee

- Establish a schedule of achievable milestones for each degree program under its jurisdiction. Ensure that the program design is appropriate for achieving the training objectives within a reasonable time frame and consistent with the policies of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.
- Ensure that procedures are in place such that all IPN students who register in the University have a qualified supervisor.
- Establish policies and procedures with respect to quality of supervision within the University's guidelines, including qualifications of professors for sole, joint or co-supervision of students in the Integrated Program in Neuroscience. Ensure that supervisors have competence in their respective students' proposed areas of research, supervisory skills and interpersonal communication. Ensure that the maximum number of students under the direction of a single supervisor is consistent with the ability of that supervisor to provide quality supervision, taking into account his/her workload, availability of any required funding, and the norms of the discipline. The Director, in consultation with the Graduate Program Committee, determines and regularly reviews supervisory privileges of each professor in the Integrated Program in Neuroscience according to experience, performance, availability of resources and number of students supervised. Limitations on supervisory privileges may include requiring a co-supervisor, limiting the number of students or their program level, requiring actions to improve supervisory skills, and suspending privileges.
- The Director is responsible for ensuring that the mandatory progress tracking procedures of the university are followed, and for advising parties on how to resolve difficulties that arise in the supervisory process.
- Establish in writing clear procedures for conflict resolution and for dealing with changes of supervision. Ensure that this information is made available to students. If a change of supervisor is warranted, assist the student in finding a new supervisor. The Director is responsible for establishing and publicizing this policy, for advising the student and members of the thesis advisory committee and/or supervisor, and seeking consensus on and resolution of the issue(s) involved. The Dean and Associate Dean of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies are available for consultation and assistance as needed.

Provide Information and Set Appropriate Program Requirements

- Ensure that the guidelines, criteria and procedures for thesis advisory committees, progress tracking, degree requirements and comprehensive examinations are explicit and consistently applied in each degree program.
- Periodically review the rationales for all program requirements.
- Provide easy-to-access information to potential students on the cost of living in Montréal, the possibilities of funding, average funding per student, program completion rates, professional outcomes of program graduates, and information on faculty members and their area of research expertise.
- Establish an effective communication system with graduate students (e.g. departmental mailboxes, e-mail distribution lists and meetings).

Allocate Graduate Student Funding

- Maintain an up-to-date strategic plan for distribution of fellowship and bursary support and awards in an equitable and transparent manner consistent with the Faculty's and the University's funding policy and goals.

Support the Professional Development of Students and Supervisors

- Arrange academic activities that contribute to creating a stimulating research environment, such as seminars, invited speakers and opportunities to share research or develop other professional skills.
- Inform students and supervisors of opportunities within the University at large to improve professional skills.

General Responsibilities of the University

The University has responsibilities with regard to ensuring quality research programs, research environments and supervision. Among these are responsibilities to:

- Provide policies and information promoting an equitable environment free of harassment and discrimination prohibited by the law.
- Provide policies and information on academic integrity; the responsible conduct of research; the ethical conduct of research on human and animal subjects; safety and the appropriate handling of hazardous materials.
- Provide the general framework for graduate education at McGill consistent with the policies and requirements of the Quebec Ministry of Education, Leisure and Sport (MELS) and high standards for quality education.
- Develop and provide information on all rules, regulations, guidelines, program requirements and policies pertinent to graduate studies.
- Provide information on funding opportunities for graduate students.
- Provide opportunities for graduate students to develop professional skills.
- Specify allocation criteria for distributing fellowship and bursary support and awards in an equitable and transparent manner, and in a manner consistent with the strategic objectives of the University.

- Provide information, workshops and mentoring models for supervisors, and procedures for monitoring the quality of graduate student supervision and for providing constructive feedback to units and supervisors.
- Establish criteria of excellence in supervision and graduate teaching appropriate to the various disciplines and suitably reward those who meet these criteria.
- Monitor and report to the community on graduate completion rates, and graduate funding levels.
- Through Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, serve as partners with units, Graduate Program Directors, Graduate Program administrators, and graduate students on matters related to graduate education.

We ***strongly*** encourage you to print out this agreement for your files.

By submitting this form I am aware of and understand the content of this document including the appended program milestones and general responsibilities of graduate students, supervisors, the Graduate Program and the University defined by Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

Submit

